



How Can We Apply Revelation 22's Teachings to Our Lives?

Sixbert SANGWA • September 26, 2024

As we conclude our study of [Revelation 21](#), which depicted the glorious New Jerusalem descending from heaven, we now turn our attention to the final chapter of the Bible. [Revelation 22](#) continues the vision of the eternal state and provides a fitting conclusion to God's revealed Word. In our journey through Scripture, we often encounter passages that challenge our understanding and invite deeper reflection. This prophetic text offers a glimpse into the future, building upon the magnificent imagery of the New Heaven and New Earth introduced in the previous chapter. Let us humbly approach this chapter, seeking wisdom and insight as we examine it verse by verse, keeping in mind the context of what has come before.

In Revelation 22, John's vision continues. [Verse 1](#) paints a beautiful picture of the New Jerusalem: *"Then he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb."* The *"river of the water of life"* symbolizes the eternal life and spiritual nourishment that flows directly from God's presence. Its description as "clear as crystal" emphasizes not only its purity but also its transparency, indicating the absence of any impurity or deception in God's provision. This clarity represents the perfect truthfulness and reliability of God's sustenance. The imagery reminds us of Jesus' words in [John 7:38](#), where He speaks of *"rivers of living water"* flowing from those who believe in Him. In the eternal state, we will experience the fullness of this living water, sustaining us forever with its crystal-clear purity and life-giving properties. This imagery also echoes other biblical passages. In [Ezekiel 47:1-12](#), the prophet describes a river flowing from the temple, bringing life wherever it goes. [Psalm 46:4](#) speaks of a river whose streams make glad the city of God. Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman in [John 4:13-14](#) also alludes to this living water. Finally, [Zechariah 14:8](#) prophesies about living waters flowing out from Jerusalem, further connecting this imagery to the New Jerusalem described in Revelation.

[Verse 2](#) continues the description of the New Jerusalem, introducing the tree of life: *"down the middle of the city's main street. The tree of life was on both sides of the river, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for healing the nations"* This tree, first mentioned in [Genesis 2:9](#), now reappears, symbolizing the restoration of paradise and humanity's access to eternal life. The twelve kinds of fruit suggest abundance and completeness, while the monthly fruit production implies eternal sustenance. The healing leaves for the nations indicate the comprehensive restoration and wholeness that God's presence brings to all of creation. This imagery echoes [Ezekiel 47:12](#), where trees along a river produce fruit for food and leaves for healing. It also recalls [Psalm 1:3](#), which compares the righteous to a fruitful tree planted by streams of water. The concept of healing for the nations aligns with [Isaiah 53:5](#), where the Messiah's wounds bring healing, and [Jeremiah 33:6](#), which speaks of God bringing health and healing to His people.

[Verse 3](#): *"and there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him"* This powerful statement declares the end of the curse that entered the world through sin ([Genesis 3](#)). In the New Jerusalem, all effects of the Fall are reversed. God's throne, representing His sovereign rule and presence, is centrally located, emphasizing direct communion between God and His people. Worship becomes the natural, joyful response of God's servants in His presence. This fulfillment echoes the promises in [Isaiah 25:8](#), where God swallows up death forever, and [1 Corinthians 15:54-55](#), which speaks of death's defeat. The concept of God dwelling with His people is also found in [Ezekiel 37:27](#) and [2 Corinthians 6:16](#). The joy of worship in God's presence is beautifully expressed in [Psalm 16:11](#) and [Zephaniah 3:17](#).

[Verse 4](#): *"They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads"*. This verse speaks of the intimate relationship between God and His people. Seeing God's face implies perfect communion and understanding, fulfilling the deepest longings of the human heart. The name on their foreheads signifies ownership, protection, and identity. It's a beautiful picture of belonging fully to God.

[Verse 5](#): *"Night will be no more; people will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, because the Lord God will give them light, and they will reign forever and ever"*. The absence of night symbolizes the end of darkness, both literal and spiritual. God's presence will illuminate everything, rendering artificial or created light unnecessary. This eternal day represents perfect knowledge, safety, and joy ([1 Corinthians 13:12](#)). The promise that God's people will reign forever signifies the restoration of humanity's original purpose as stewards of God's creation. This imagery echoes [Isaiah 60:19-20](#), which prophesies about the Lord being an everlasting light. It also aligns with [1 John 1:5](#), describing God as light in whom there is no darkness. The concept of reigning with Christ finds further support in [2 Timothy 2:12](#) and [Romans 8:17](#), which speak of believers sharing in Christ's reign and inheritance.

[Verses 6-7](#): *"Then he said to me, 'These words are faithful and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.'" "Look, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book"*". These verses affirm the reliability of the prophecy. The angel emphasizes that these revelations come from the same God who inspired the prophets throughout history. The promise of Christ's return is reiterated, along with a blessing for those who heed the prophecy. This encourages believers to live in light of these truths, maintaining an attitude of readiness and faithfulness. This aligns with [2 Peter 1:19-21](#), which speaks of the reliability of prophetic word. The urgency of Christ's return echoes [James 5:8](#) and [1 Peter 4:7](#). The blessing for those who heed the prophecy is reminiscent of [Luke 11:28](#) and [James 1:22](#), emphasizing the importance of not just hearing, but also obeying God's Word.

[Verses 8-9](#): *"I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had shown them to me. But he said to me, 'Don't do that! I am a fellow servant with you, your brothers the prophets, and those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!'"*. John solemnly declares that he personally *"heard and saw these things,"* emphasizing the authenticity of his vision. His reaction to the overwhelming revelations is understandable, as he falls down to worship the angel. However, the angel's response is crucial, firmly redirecting John's worship. This interaction reinforces the fundamental principle that only God is worthy of worship. It serves as a powerful reminder that no matter how impressive or authoritative a created being might appear, our worship and devotion should be directed to God alone. This aligns with Jesus' words in [Matthew 4:10](#) and the teachings in [Acts 10:25-26](#), [Acts 14:11-15](#), and [Colossians 2:18](#). The importance of worshipping God alone is further emphasized in [Exodus 20:3-5](#) and [Isaiah 42:8](#).

[Verses 10-11](#): *"Then he said to me, 'Don't seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near. Let the unrighteous go on in unrighteousness; let the filthy still be filthy; let the righteous go on in righteousness; let the holy still be holy.'"* Unlike Daniel, who was instructed to seal up his prophecy for a future time ([Daniel 12:4](#)), John is told to keep this revelation open—to share it immediately with the church. This command underscores the prophecy's immediate relevance and its significance for readers throughout church history. The stark contrast between the righteous and the unrighteous emphasizes both the urgency of the message and the fixed nature of one's spiritual state at the moment of judgment. This urgency is also reflected in [1 Peter 4:7](#), [Romans 11:12](#), and [James 5:8-9](#). The concept of a fixed spiritual state at judgment aligns with [Ecclesiastes 11:3](#) and [Hebrews 9:27](#).

In [verses 12-13](#), Christ reaffirms His imminent return, emphasizing the judgment and reward that will accompany it: *"Look, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me to repay each person according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."* This declaration of His eternal nature underscores both His authority to judge and His faithfulness to fulfill all promises. This echoes similar declarations in [Isaiah 44:6](#), [Revelation 1:8](#), and [Hebrews 13:8](#). The concept of Christ's authority to judge is further supported by [John 5:22-23](#) and [Acts 17:31](#), while His faithfulness to fulfill promises is emphasized in [2 Corinthians 1:20](#) and [2 Peter 3:9](#).

[Verses 14-15](#) present a stark contrast between those who enter the New Jerusalem and those who are excluded: *"Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood"* ([Revelation 22:14-15](#)). The imagery of washed robes symbolizes those cleansed by Christ's sacrifice ([Revelation 7:14](#)). The list of those outside the city represents unrepentant sinners, underscoring the necessity of repentance and faith in Christ.

[Verses 16-17](#): *"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to attest these things to you for the churches. I am the root and descendant of David, the bright morning star."* Both the Spirit and the bride say, *"Come!"* Let anyone who hears, say, *"Come!"* Let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who desires take the water of life freely" In this passage, "Jesus identifies Himself as the sender of the revelation, emphasizing its divine origin and authority. He then uses two messianic titles to describe Himself. As *"the root and descendant of David,"* Jesus affirms His fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah coming from David's lineage ([Isaiah 11:1](#), [Jeremiah 23:5](#)). The title *"bright morning star"* evokes images of hope and new beginnings, symbolizing Christ's role in ushering in a new era of God's kingdom ([Numbers 24:17](#), [2 Peter 1:19](#)). The invitation that follows is a beautiful collaboration between the Holy Spirit and the Church (the bride) to call people to Christ. This universal invitation echoes [Isaiah 55:1](#) and [John 7:37](#), offering the *"water of life"* - symbolic of eternal life and spiritual fulfillment - freely to all who desire it. The repetition of *"Come!"* emphasizes the urgency and openness of this invitation, reflecting God's desire for all to be saved ([1 Timothy 2:4](#)). This passage serves as a powerful conclusion to Revelation, encapsulating the gospel message and the hope of Christ's return.

[Verses 18-19](#): *"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are written about in this book"*. This passage warns against altering the book of Revelation, emphasizing the authority and finality of God's revelation. The solemn phrase *"I testify"* underscores its divine origin. This warning applies universally to all readers, cautioning against both adding to and subtracting from God's Word. It stresses the completeness of God's revelation and the importance of preserving its integrity. Severe consequences for altering God's Word are mentioned, mirroring earlier blessings and curses in Revelation. The *"tree of life"* and *"holy city"* symbolize eternal life and communion with God. This warning not only protects Revelation's message but also reinforces the principle of respecting all of Scripture, reminding us of the serious responsibility we have in handling and interpreting God's Word faithfully.

The book concludes with a final promise of Christ's return, followed by John's response—a heartfelt cry that should resonate with all believers. [Verses 20-21](#) state: *"He who testifies about these things says, 'Yes, I am coming soon.' Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen."* This final passage of Revelation is rich with meaning. "He who testifies about these things" refers to Jesus, underscoring divine authority. His promise, *"Yes, I am coming soon,"* reaffirms Christ's return as the central theme. John's response, *"Come, Lord Jesus!"* expresses the Church's eager anticipation. The final benediction, *"The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints,"* reminds us that God's grace saves and sustains us until that glorious day. The concluding *"Amen"* seals the book's message with divine authority.

As we reflect on this prophetic chapter, we are reminded of the hope we have in Christ. Revelation 22 paints a picture of a restored paradise, where God dwells with His people in perfect harmony. It offers comfort to those facing persecution, encouragement to those growing weary, and a stern warning to those who might take God's Word lightly. In our current world, marked by uncertainty and challenges, this prophecy serves as an anchor for our souls. It reminds us that history is moving towards a glorious culmination in Christ. As we await that day, may we live with hope, share the gospel with urgency, and continually echo the prayer, *"Come, Lord Jesus!"* Let us approach this prophecy with humility, recognizing that while we see in part now, one day we will understand fully. Until then, may we hold fast to the promises of God, living lives that reflect the coming reality of His eternal kingdom.

Related Articles

- [What is the Prophetic Message of Revelation 18?](#)
- [How Can We Approach the Rich Symbolism of Revelation 17?](#)
- [How Can We Approach the Profound Mysteries of Revelation 20?](#)
- [What Can We Learn from the Profound Message of Revelation 19?](#)
- [How Do Spiritual Forces Influence National and International Affairs?](#)
- [How Can We Interpret the Seven Bowls of God's Wrath in Revelation 16?](#)
- [How Can We Understand the Promise of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21?](#)

Further Resources

- Explore Online Ministry Opportunities at [Open Christian Ministries](#) (USA)
- Explore Christian Business Services at the [Center for Faith and Work](#) (Rwanda)
- Pursue an Affordable Online Christian Degree at [Open Christian University](#) (USA)
- Kindly Share Your Question for Consideration in Future Articles. [Click Here to Submit](#)
- Ask a Question or Utilize Our Trained AI Bot to Craft Your Evangelical Article - [Begin Here](#)



← Back to blog

Comments (0)

Post Comment

